

your pay, we are not going to give you the benefits which we promised you, and think that they were going to keep personnel on board with high morale and highly motivated to do the job, not only for us Members but for the American people. No employer would think that they can mistreat their employees and expect the highest performance out of them. And certainly no employer would think that if I treat my employees the way we have been treating Federal employees that we could recruit and retain the best and the brightest to serve our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the President to rescind his order. That is not to say that executives in all of these agencies should not look at making sure that we have the proper number of employees on board and are acting efficiently and effectively and working hard to accomplish the objectives that we as a Congress, on behalf of the American people, have given them. That is the issue.

I urge my Republican friends, in this House and in the Senate, to speak out against it. And I urge all Federal employees and their families to speak up in their communities across our country to remind their fellow Americans of the important work they do and why this hiring freeze would be so harmful to our country.

Giving one another respect in America is not political correctness. It is the way we ought to treat one another. And we ought to treat our public employees who work for us and our country with the same kind of respect that we would want for ourselves. Frankly, respect of one another was a victim in this last campaign, but it should not be and must not be the norm.

#### PROTECTING THE UNBORN AND DEFENDING LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on an issue that I care deeply about: protecting the unborn and defending life. This week, I reintroduced the Life at Conception Act.

I am honored to be the lead sponsor of the Life at Conception Act, which simply defines human life as beginning at the moment of conception. As a result, unborn babies are entitled to legal protection under the Constitution. We had a record number of original cosponsors this past Congress, and I pray this bill will pass Congress swiftly.

I believe that we have a moral obligation to protect the unborn at every stage of development. It is something I have always been passionate about. I was president of my college's pro-life group, the Dartmouth Coalition for Life. I can still remember the conversations I had with my fellow students as I discussed the value of human life with them. It was a great feeling to know that I was opening eyes to the

value of all human life one student at a time.

Protecting life is one of the issues that compelled me to run for office. When I first asked for the opportunity to serve you as your representative in Congress, I promised I would be a strong defender of the unborn. I am proud to say I have delivered on that promise.

The Life at Conception Act is a crucial part of the long-term battle to protect the unborn. It started 44 years ago to the week, in 1973 in the Roe v. Wade decision when the Supreme Court asserted that, because the beginning of life is not legally defined by Congress, it is up for interpretation by the court. The Life at Conception Act simply fills that gap and defines that human life begins at the moment of conception.

Even Vice President Joe Biden, a Democrat, recently restated publicly his belief that human life begins at conception. There is bipartisan agreement on this issue. It is important for Congress to define human life because the unborn are the most helpless among us. They need us to have enough courage to step up and protect them.

My bill also sets a standard for promoting and encouraging a culture of life. If enacted, it would simply affirm what we all know in our hearts and minds to be true: that unborn babies deserve our protection.

Last year, the Life at Conception Act had 146 cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives, including my two colleagues in West Virginia, DAVID MCKINLEY and EVAN JENKINS. I hope that more Representatives will join me in promoting respect and protection for all human life.

I continue to be guided by my faith and values. I look forward to working with my colleagues to defend the innocent and give voice to the voiceless. I welcome the marchers this week coming for the annual March for Life. I thank them for their participation in defending the unborn.

#### CONGRATULATING THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the New England Patriots on reaching their NFL record ninth Super Bowl. The very questionable suspension of Tom Brady early in the season could not stop New England or the determination and dedication to excellence that defines the New England Patriots.

Fans throughout New Hampshire and beyond are incredibly proud of their team and the unparalleled success of Tom Brady and Bill Belichick. But they would be the first to tell you that the success of the Patriots lies with not one individual but instead is built upon the core value of team before self. This year, the motto made famous by

New England, "Do Your Job," is as true as ever.

When the Patriots face the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl LI, I will be joined by everyone across New Hampshire and throughout New England in offering them good luck. Go Pats.

#### NO ONE IN AMERICA SHOULD GO HUNGRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the importance of nutrition as it relates to agriculture policy in America. Proudly, I am the vice chairman of the House Agriculture Committee for the 115th Congress and chairman of the Nutrition Subcommittee.

Agriculture policy is near and dear to my heart, as it is the number one industry in Pennsylvania. It brings nearly \$6.9 billion annually in cash receipts to the Commonwealth. Almost half a million jobs are tied to the industry, which positively impacts all Pennsylvanians.

Our farmers feed America. Farmers play a pivotal role in the nutrition of families in this country. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food insecurity has decreased across the Nation in recent years. However, USDA found that 12.7 percent of all households in the United States faced hunger in 2015. Mr. Speaker, no one in America should go hungry.

The Nutrition Subcommittee oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which used to be referred to as food stamps. Over the past 2 years, under the leadership of Agriculture Committee Chairman MIKE CONAWAY, this subcommittee examined what is working with SNAP and what could be improved. More than 43 million Americans rely on SNAP to put food on the table for themselves and their families.

SNAP has grown from a pilot program that served just 500,000 people in 1964 to a program that served more than 47 million Americans at the height of the recession. SNAP is now the largest program under the Agriculture Committee's jurisdiction, accounting for almost 80 percent of farm bill spending, and is the largest Federal food program serving low-income families in the United States. SNAP is literally a lifeline for many of the least fortunate among us.

During the subcommittee's examination of SNAP, it hosted more than 16 hearings and had 60 witnesses testify. The goals of these hearings were to better understand SNAP and the population it serves, to review how SNAP utilizes cash and noncash benefits to serve that population, and to examine ways the program could be improved.

Four themes emerged from the hearings:

First, serving SNAP recipients through innovation and flexibility in